

**PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT - MIDDLE EAST AND  
NORTH AFRICA  
September 10, 2004**

This Public Announcement is being updated to alert Americans to ongoing security concerns in the region. U.S. citizens are reminded to maintain a high level of vigilance and to take appropriate steps to increase their security awareness. This Public Announcement supersedes the Public Announcement issued on June 18, 2004, and expires February 18, 2005.

The August 20, 2004 U.S. indictment of key HAMAS figures may be used as an excuse to target American citizens or American interests throughout the region. In addition, the Department of State continues to warn of the possibility for demonstrations and violent actions against U.S. citizens and interests in the region. Anti-American violence could include possible terrorist actions against aviation, ground transportation and maritime interests, specifically in the Middle East, including the Red Sea, Persian Gulf, the Arabian Peninsula and North Africa.

The Department is concerned that extremists may be planning to carry out attacks against Westerners and oil workers in the Gulf region. Recent armed attacks targeting foreign nationals in Saudi Arabia that resulted in many deaths and injuries, including U.S. citizens, appear to have been preceded by extensive surveillance. Extremists may be surveilling Westerners, particularly at hotels and those using rental cars. U.S. contractors may be some of the potential targets.

Credible information has indicated terrorist groups seek to continue attacks against U.S. interests in the Middle East. Terrorist actions may include additional suicide operations, bombings, hijackings, kidnappings and targeted attacks resulting in death. While conventional weapons such as explosive devices are a more immediate threat in many areas, use of non-conventional weapons, including chemical or biological agents must be considered a possible threat. Terrorists do not distinguish between official and civilian targets. Increased security at official U.S. facilities has led terrorists and their sympathizers to seek softer targets such as public transportation, residential areas, and public areas where people congregate.

On occasion, the travel of official personnel at embassies and consulates around the world is restricted because of security concerns, and these posts may recommend that private U.S. citizens avoid the same areas if at all possible. Services to U.S. citizens in countries abroad may be affected if employees' movements are restricted. If this happens, U.S. embassies and

consulates will make every effort to provide emergency services to U.S. citizens. In case office hours are reduced, U.S. citizens in need of emergency assistance should telephone the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate before visiting in person.

In addition, U.S. citizens planning to travel to the Middle East or North Africa should consult the Department of State's country-specific Public Announcements, Travel Warnings, Consular Information Sheets, the Worldwide Caution Public Announcement and other information, available on the Consular Affairs Internet website at <http://travel.state.gov>. Up-to-date information on security conditions can also be obtained by calling 1-888-407-4747 in the U.S. and for callers outside the U.S. and Canada a regular toll line at 1-317-472-2328.

The Department of State encourages all American citizens residing in Morocco to register their presence and obtain up-to-date information on security conditions at the U.S. Consulate General in Casablanca at 8 Blvd. Moulay Youssef, Telephone: **022-43-05-78**, or visit our website at:  
**[www.usembassy.ma/Services/Consular/travel\\_information.htm](http://www.usembassy.ma/Services/Consular/travel_information.htm)**